CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 1 FEBRUARY 1990 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MEXICO ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING THE MESSAGE TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT OF HIS EXCELLENCY CARLOS SALINAS DE GORTARI, PRESIDENT OF MEXICO, ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF THE 1990 SESSION

I have the honour to transmit herewith the message of His Excellency Carlos Salinas de Gortari, President of Mexico, to the Conference on Disarmament on the occasion of the opening of the 1990 session.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the message to be circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed): Miguel Marín Bosch
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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MESSAGE TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT OF H.E. CARLOS SALINAS DE GORTARI, PRESIDENT OF MEXICO

Today the Conference on Disarmament is once again taking up its important task, at a time of renewed hope in disarmament. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America have begun talks and negotiations on a number of issues, beginning with nuclear disarmament, and the community of nations is witnessing the emergence of fresh and encouraging developments in the search for international peace and security.

The Conference on Disarmament now has before it an unmatched opportunity to translate this climate of détente into specific agreements on the priority issues: nuclear disarmament, and more particularly the cessation of all nuclear tests, and the elimination of chemical weapons.

Disarmament has been under discussion at the Palais des Nations in Geneva for over a half a century. We ought now to move forward along the path marked out by the United Nations to achieve a safer world with fewer weapons. The ultimate objective of general and complete disarmament under effective international control remains as valid today as it was in 1962 when this Conference began its work.

As members of the Conference on Disarmament, all of us have a duty and an obligation to fulfil the hopes of the peoples of the world, to banish the spectre of war and its deadly instruments. The bilateral understandings should be followed by disarmament agreements negotiated on a multilateral basis. The most pressing issue is the total suspension of nuclear tests. A number of possibilities are open to us in order to achieve that objective.

The elimination of chemical weapons is also a matter of priority. The international community is entitled to demand the rapid conclusion of a convention in this field. We need to draw up a comprehensive programme of disarmament to serve as a framework for our efforts. Not one of us, moreover, is unaware of the close link between disarmament and economic development.

We have instructed our delegation to the Conference to maintain Mexico's constructive contribution towards achieving the objectives we have all set outselves and to strive to strengthen the role of the United Nations in this field of such vital importance to mankind.

I should now like to take this opportunity to say a few words to the Conference about a great Mexican who is well known to all of you.

The Government of Mexico will shortly be paying a national tribute to Mr. Alfonso García Robles. On behalf of the people and Government of Mexico, I should like here and now to express our gratitude to Ambassador Emeritus García Robles for his tireless devotion in defending the guiding principles of our foreign policy. Those principles correspond to those in the Charter of the United Nations, an organization he served for 10 years as an international official.

His involvement in this Conference began almost a quarter of a century ago, on 21 February 1967, when he presented the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which had been opened for signature in Mexico City a week before. It was quite natural that the presentation should have been the responsibility of the then Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, as he had led Mexico's efforts to evolve a legal instrument embodying Latin America's aspiration to become a nuclear-free zone. He subsequently participated actively and without interruption in the annual sessions of the Conference of Disarmament: first of all as Under-Secretary, then as Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York and in 1977 as Minister for Foreign Affairs. From 1977 onwards, he became Permanent Representative to the Conference itself.

In 1982 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize together with Mrs. Alva Myrdal of Sweden. Today we wish to assure him once again of our respect, recognition and gratitude.